

from their suffering must be severely punished. Those who patronize this industry debase themselves and deepen the misery of others. And governments that tolerate this trade are tolerating a form of slavery.

This problem has appeared in my own country, and we are working to stop it. The PROTECT Act, which I signed into law this year, makes it a crime for any person to enter the United States or for any citizen to travel abroad for the purpose of sex tourism involving children. The Department of Justice is actively investigating sex tour operators and patrons, who can face up to 30 years in prison. Under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, the United States is using sanctions against governments to discourage human trafficking.

The victims of this industry also need help from members of the United Nations, and this begins with clear standards and the certainty of punishment under the laws of every country. Today, some nations make it a crime to sexually abuse children abroad. Such conduct should be a crime in all nations. Governments should inform travelers of the harm this industry does and the severe punishments that will fall on its patrons. The American Government is committing \$50 million to support the good work of organizations that are rescuing women and children from exploitation and giving them shelter and medical treatment and the hope of a new life. I urge other governments to do their part.

We must show new energy in fighting back an old evil. Nearly two centuries after the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade and more than a century after slavery was officially ended in its last strongholds, the trade in human beings for any purpose must not be allowed to thrive in our time.

All the challenges I have spoken of this morning require urgent attention and moral clarity. Helping Afghanistan and Iraq to succeed as free nations in a transformed region, cutting off the avenues of proliferation, abolishing modern forms of slavery, these are the kind of great tasks for which the United Nations was founded. In each case, careful discussion is needed and also decisive action. Our good intentions will be credited only if we achieve good outcomes.

As an original signer of the U.N. Charter, the United States of America is committed to the United Nations. And we show that commitment by working to fulfill the U.N.'s stated purposes and giving meaning to its ideals. The founding documents of the United Nations and the founding documents of America stand in the same tradition. Both assert that human beings should never be reduced to objects of power or commerce, because their dignity is inherent. Both require—both recognize a moral law that stands above men and nations, which must be defended and enforced by men and nations. And both point the way to peace, the peace that comes when all are free. We secure that peace with our courage, and we must show that courage together.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:59 a.m. in the General Assembly Hall at the United Nations Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary-General Kofi Annan, General Assembly President Julian Hunte, and Special Representative for Iraq Sergio Vieira de Mello of the United Nations; President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain in New York City

September 23, 2003

President Bush. It's my honor to visit again with my very close friend, a great friend of our country, Jose Maria Aznar. Jose Maria is a very strong leader who's got a vision that's based upon the principles of human dignity and freedom.

And we'll spend time talking about Iraq. We're both convinced and strongly believe that our goals in Iraq are the right goals, and we'll accomplished the goals.

He's a steadfast friend, and I'm so proud to be with you again.

[At this point, President Aznar spoke in Spanish, and no translation was provided.]

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:02 p.m. at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks at a Luncheon Hosted by Secretary-General Kofi Annan of the United Nations in New York City

September 23, 2003

Mr. Secretary-General; distinguished members of the United Nations community; excellencies; ladies and gentlemen: America is honored that you all are here. Since the founding of the U.N. more than 50 years ago, my country has been proud to host this organization. I'm pleased to join you in opening the 58th session of the U.N. General Assembly. Mr. Secretary-General, I am grateful for your leadership, and I'm proud to call you friend.

The United Nations has suffered great loss in the cause of peace. The terrorist attack against the U.N. headquarters in Baghdad took the lives of 22 servants of peace, including Sergio de Mello, a man who dedicated his life to promoting human rights throughout the world. The people of my country mourn with you. We share your resolve to continue this important work. We gather in this city, at this Assembly, to meet urgent challenges of our time. We will work together to promote peace and human dignity.

Mr. Secretary-General, with admiration for you and with confidence in the future of this organization, I offer a toast to your leadership and to the United Nations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:45 p.m. at the United Nations Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to U.N. Special Representative for Iraq Sergio Vieira de Mello. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary-General Annan. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks at a United States Reception in New York City

September 23, 2003

The President. Thank you all very much. Please be seated. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. Not everyone has a seat.

The President. Unless you don't have a chair. [*Laughter*] For the sake of world harmony, I will give a short speech—[*laughter*—and then we can all go to bed. [*Laughter*]

First, I want to thank the American Museum of Natural History for their wonderful hospitality. We've got trustees here and the leadership of this fantastic place. It's such a wonderful opportunity for Laura and me and our delegation to show off one of the really fantastic landmarks of New York City. So on behalf of our delegation, thanks for your wonderful hospitality. It's a beautiful place to have a wonderful reception.

Laura and I and the Secretary are honored to welcome the Presidents and Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers and U.N. Ambassadors and anybody else who managed to sneak in tonight. [*Laughter*] We're glad you're here. It's been a fantastic reception for us, and thank you for coming.

I really want to say quickly a word about Kofi Annan. I admire his decency and his vision and his compassion for our fellow human beings. He's a great leader of the United Nations, and we're proud to call him friend.

Somebody whispered in my ear that Mayor Bloomberg is here. He is the mayor of New York City. Michael is the mayor of a great city. On September the 11th, this Nation saw the remarkable spirit of the people who live in this city. We'll always remember how our fellow citizens who happen to be New Yorkers instantly rallied to help their neighbors in need. New York's famous skyline was wounded, but its spirit remained steadfast.

In pursuing the terrorists, we honor the memory of the fallen, and we defend civilization itself. I want all the world leaders to remember that. In working to alleviate poverty, disease, and human suffering, we spread hope to millions, and we undermine the